

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**  
**FY 2014 Regional Innovation Strategies Program**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- **Federal Agency Name:** Economic Development Administration (EDA), U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC).
- **Funding Opportunity Title:** FY 2014 Regional Innovation Grants
- **Announcement Type and Date:** Initial FY 2014 Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) announcement publishing EDA's application submission requirements and review procedures for applications received under EDA's Regional Innovation Strategies Program, as authorized by section 27 of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, amending the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. § 3722, P.L. 111-358). Effective date: September 4, 2014
- **Funding Opportunity Number:** EDA-HDQ-OIE-2014-2004219
- **Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Numbers:** 11.020 Cluster Grants; and 11.030 Science and Research Park Development Grants
- **Dates:** The deadline for receipt of applications is 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on **Monday, November 3, 2014**. Applications received after this deadline will not be reviewed or considered. Applications will only be accepted electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) (Grants.gov). Applicants are advised to carefully read the application and submission information provided in section IV. of this FFO.
- **Funding Opportunity Description:** EDA is committed to helping foster connected, innovation-centric economic sectors which support commercialization and entrepreneurship as described in the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010. Working with regions across the country to develop regional innovation strategies, including regional innovation clusters, is also a Strategic Goal of the DOC's FY 2014-2018 Strategic Plan and a keystone of the Secretary's commitment to building globally competitive regions. As part of this strategy, funding is available for capacity-building activities that include Proof of Concept Centers and Commercialization Centers as well as scaling of existing commercialization programs and centers; feasibility studies for the creation and expansion of facilities such as science and research parks; and supporting opportunities to close the funding gap for early-stage companies. To that end, EDA's existing and highly successful i6 Challenge is being joined by additional grant opportunities to create the Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) Program. Under this program, EDA is soliciting applications for three separate competitions:
  1. 2014 i6 Challenge;
  2. Science and Research Park Development Grants; and
  3. Cluster Grants for Seed Capital Funds.

Applicants may, but are not required to, submit proposals for more than one competition under the RIS Program.

Note that previous grants and competitions administered by EDA have been governed by the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 3121 *et seq.*) (PWEDA). The authorization for the 2014 RIS Program is provided under Section 27 of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-358), which does not include a requirement that grants be focused in economically-distressed communities.

- **Eligible applicants:** EDA is not authorized to provide grants or cooperative agreements to individuals. Requests from such entities will not be considered for funding. Eligible applicants for EDA financial assistance under this FFO include:
  1. a State;
  2. an Indian tribe;
  3. a city or other political subdivision of a State;
  4. an entity that—
    - a. is a nonprofit organization, an institution of higher education, a public-private partnership, a science or research park, a Federal laboratory, or an economic development organization or similar entity; and
    - b. has an application that is supported by a State or a political subdivision of a State; or
  5. a consortium of any of the entities described in subparagraphs (1) through (4).

For Science and Research Park Development Grants *only*, in addition to the types of applicants listed above, the following applicants are also eligible to apply:

6. a Hospital;
7. a Commercial organization; or,
8. a consortium of any of the entities described in subparagraphs (1) through (7).

Please note that while commercial organizations are eligible entities for Science and Research Park Development grants, in evaluating applications, EDA will provide preference to organizations and consortia that demonstrate regional collaboration and the ability to leverage and complement existing state, local, and non-profit organization programs and initiatives that support science and research, such as university-based programs, National Laboratories, etc. *See* section V.A.2.b. *See* 15 U.S.C. § 3722.

- **Informational Webinar:** An informational webinar for this Funding Opportunity is available for viewing at [www.eda.gov](http://www.eda.gov).
- **Award Notification:** Subject to the availability of funding, successful applicants should expect to receive grant award notification within approximately 90 days from the application closing date and times set out in this FFO.

**FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT**  
**FY 2014 Regional Innovation Strategies Program**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	1
FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT.....	3
I. Funding Opportunity Description .....	4
A. Overview .....	4
B. FY 2014 i6 Challenge .....	5
C. Science and Research Park Development Grants .....	8
D. Cluster Grants for Seed Funds .....	10
E. Statutory authorities for the Regional Innovation Strategies Program .....	11
II. Award information.....	12
A. What funding is available under this announcement? .....	12
B. What type of funding instrument will be used to make awards and how long will project periods be? .....	12
III. Eligibility Information .....	13
A. Eligible Applicants.....	13
B. Cost Sharing or Matching .....	14
IV. Application and Submission Information .....	14
A. How to Obtain an Application Package.....	14
B. Content and Form of Application Submission.....	15
C. Deadlines for submission .....	17
D. How to submit an application .....	17
V. Application Review and Selection Process.....	18
A. Evaluation Criteria .....	18
B. Review and Selection Process .....	23
VI. Award Administration Information .....	24
A. Award notification .....	24
B. Administrative and national policy requirements .....	25
C. Reporting requirements.....	25
D. Regulations, administrative requirements, and cost principles.....	25
E. EDA's Non-relocation Policy .....	26
F. OMB Circular A-133 audit requirements .....	27
VII. Other Information .....	27
A. Freedom of Information Act Disclosure .....	27
B. Past Performance and Non-Compliance with Award Provisions .....	27

C.	Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System, and Central Contractor Registration .....	28
D.	Restrictions Governing Making Grants to Corporations Convicted of Felony Criminal Violations and/or Unpaid Federal Tax Liabilities .....	28
E.	Environmental and historic preservation requirements .....	28
F.	Intergovernmental review .....	28
G.	Implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) .....	29
VIII.	EDA Contact Information.....	29
IX.	Instructions for Application Submission via Grants.gov .....	30
<b>Appendix A.</b> Representation by Corporations Regarding an Unpaid Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Conviction Under Any Federal Law .....		34

## **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

### **A. Overview**

This Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) announcement sets out the application submission and review procedures for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) Program.

EDA is committed to helping foster connected, innovation-centric economic sectors which support commercialization and entrepreneurship as described in the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-358). Working with regions across the country to develop regional innovation strategies, including regional innovation clusters, is also a strategic goal of the Department of Commerce (DOC) FY 2014-2018 Strategic Plan and a keystone of the Secretary of Commerce's commitment to building globally competitive regions. As part of this strategy, funding is available for capacity-building activities that include Proof of Concept Centers and Commercialization Centers as well as scaling of existing commercialization programs and centers; feasibility studies for the creation and expansion of facilities such as science and research parks; and supporting opportunities to close the early stage funding gap for early-stage companies. To that end, EDA's existing and highly successful i6 Challenge is being joined by additional grant opportunities to create the RIS Program. Under this program, EDA is soliciting applications for three separate competitions:

1. 2014 i6 Challenge;
2. Science and Research Park Development Grants; and
3. Cluster Grants for Seed Capital Funds.

Applicants may, but are not required to, submit proposals for more than one competition under the RIS Program.

Note that previous grants and competitions administered by EDA have been governed by the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 3121 *et seq.*) (PWEDA). The authorization for the 2014 Regional Innovation Strategies Program is

provided under the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-358), which does not restrict the focus of grantees' projects to economically distressed communities.

## **B. FY 2014 i6 Challenge**

The i6 Challenge is a leading national initiative designed to support the creation of centers for innovation and entrepreneurship that increase the commercialization of innovations, ideas, intellectual property and research into viable companies. Launched in 2010 as part of the Startup America Initiative, and now funded through EDA's Cluster Grant program under section 27 of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, the i6 Challenge is a national competition based on the most impactful national models for startup creation, innovation, and commercialization. It has been at the vanguard of Administration efforts to increase the number of startups as well as commercialize more research that will create greater economic value, and ultimately, jobs for the American people.

Regional economic vitality is best accomplished through multi-stakeholder partnerships and collaborations that draw upon public, corporate, university, non-profit, and philanthropic resources. Regional innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystems—which have a culture of idea generation, leadership, trust, openness to foraging new partnerships with disparate parties, entrepreneurial development, investment capital, and a large pool of accomplished managers—often fuel these partnerships and collaborations. These ecosystems are the regional building blocks of a regional innovation strategy that helps drive national competitiveness.

### **1. How are Proof of Concept Centers and Commercialization Centers Distinguishable?**

The following definitions are provided for the purposes of this FFO:

**Proof of Concept Center:** A center or program (physical or virtual) which works with very early stage innovations, ideas, intellectual property, and research to provide documented evidence that a product or service can be successful. Technology Readiness Levels (TRL's) as defined by the U.S. Department of Defense<sup>1</sup>, are a standardized system, categorizing the status of a technology innovation, or its readiness for commercialization. A Proof of Concept Center typically works with innovations from conception to TRL levels 3 – 6 to include consideration for viability of the technology (i.e., *can* this be done) as well as market potential and financial viability (i.e., *should* this be done).

**Commercialization Center:** A center or program (physical or virtual) which works with later stage innovations, ideas, intellectual property, and research to complete and refine the innovation from TRL levels 3 – 6 and fine-tune its market opportunity while supporting the steps toward becoming a viable or expanded business.

Proof of Concept Centers and Commercialization Centers — including former i6 grantees<sup>2</sup>—function as critical nodes for translating cutting-edge innovation into high-growth entrepreneurship in their regions. They incorporate a range of programs and services in support of innovation-based, high growth entrepreneurship and acceleration of startups through services

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<sup>1</sup> For additional information on Technology Readiness Levels, *see* <http://www.acq.osd.mil/chieftechnologist/publications/docs/TRA2011.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> *See* <http://www.eda.gov/challenges/i6/index.htm> for additional information on the i6 challenge, including former i6 grantees.

such as technology advisory and market evaluation, business planning, mentorship, and access to early stage capital. The most successful Proof of Concept Centers and Commercialization Centers leverage experiences of successful entrepreneurs and business executives, paying close attention to fostering a community with a mindset for and culture of innovation.

EDA expects to fund proposals that create or expand innovative Proof of Concept Centers or Commercialization Centers that will in turn develop the applicant's capacity to consistently and regularly create high-growth entrepreneurial ventures that contribute to economic growth in the United States. Applicants must demonstrate how they will leverage regional strengths, capabilities and competitive advantages. All applications should avoid any duplication of existing efforts, or supplanting existing or budgeted efforts. Funding for the i6 Challenge will reward proposals that bring or significantly enhance a culture of innovation and high-growth entrepreneurship to their region.

## 2. Requirements for i6 Challenge Projects

The i6 Challenge will invest in the development, creation, or expansion of Proof of Concept Centers and Commercialization Centers which accelerate innovation-led economic development in pursuit of a vibrant innovative economy and economic growth. Proof of Concept Centers and Commercialization Centers can be physical or virtual, existing or new. Existing Proof of Concept Centers and Commercialization Centers need not have previously received EDA funds to be considered for this award. To be eligible under the i6 Challenge, a proposed project must focus on driving economic development by building capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship, enabling individuals, firms and communities to achieve greater prosperity and quality of life. Specifically, applications must focus on one or more of the following project outputs:

- **Innovation:** Projects that nurture innovation broadly, and market-based applications for that innovation specifically, through the:
  - Creation of a broad-based, expansive culture of idea generation and the useful application of that innovation, including converting research and development at universities and research centers into commercially viable enterprises;
  - Engagement of a diverse set of researchers, innovators and practitioners supporting commercialization of inventions, ideas and/or research. Diversity can be defined by intellectual approach, innovation, background or experience; and
  - Engagement with industry professionals, investors, and successful entrepreneurs with innovation at its earliest stages to create the best climate, team and opportunities for an emerging high-growth startup or acceleration of an existing startup.
- **Entrepreneurship:** Projects that develop a large number of high-growth entrepreneurs across disciplines and create an ecosystem for those entrepreneurs to experiment and commercialize their innovations, as determined by:

- Support of educational programs and/or work experiences to prepare students<sup>3</sup> and researchers for entrepreneurial challenges and work environments; and
- Growth of the innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem to ensure a steady stream of high-growth startups to drive job and value creation in the home region.
- **Regional Connectivity:** Projects that connect the community of economic development and commercialization resources through:
  - Special events to showcase inventions, ideas, research, technologies, and entrepreneurs to promote the exchange of ideas leading to the formation of new collaborations and ultimately the commercialization of innovations.
  - Engagement with local business associations and government to ensure that high growth entrepreneurs and companies are more fully integrated into the local business community, and that their growing needs are addressed by a robust support network that includes specialized and readily-accessed technical assistance, access to capital, business associations and government officials.
- **Commercialization of Research:** Projects that convert ideas, research, or prototypes into viable products and services that can be monetized and brought to market in a financially manageable and rapid manner, as defined by:
  - Incorporation of mentors, industry catalysts and entrepreneurs in residence that provide advisory services and link technology and researchers to external networks;
  - Access to seed funding to support the commercialization of promising research through networks created by the organization or outside funding networks and tools;
  - Assistance with market evaluation, business planning, and business opportunity articulation; and
  - Creation of processes that integrate scientific review with market potential to greatly accelerate the best ideas from lab to market.

### 3. i6 Challenge Examples

The following are examples of regions and economic ecosystems that illustrate how the establishment of an innovation-focused Proof of Concept Center or Commercialization Center can become the catalyst for economic growth. Please note that these scenarios are informational only and are intended to provide applicants with a clearer picture of how the i6 Challenge is intended to function. These examples in no way limit the range of potential proposed projects, combinations of eligible applicants, or anchoring organizations.

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<sup>3</sup> A student is defined as an individual enrolled in a class or program. This definition includes, but is not limited to colleges, universities, and non-degree granting programs.

- **Scenario 1:** A major research university or consortium thereof has strong resources but is underperforming in commercializing their ideas and innovations. The university seeks to create a Commercialization Center to build an entrepreneurial and idea-generation culture on campus, create the processes for ideas and innovation to become companies and organizations, and become a destination for investors, successful entrepreneurs and corporations looking for cutting edge ideas, business models and technologies.
- **Scenario 2:** A region benefits from the presence of several large, multi-national corporations and a robust set of academic institutions. Pressures of globalization which has introduced more advanced products and a resulting loss of sales are leading local companies to grow their businesses elsewhere due to a lack of skilled workforce and to be closer to innovations hubs. A Commercialization Center can accelerate commercialization from existing, but immature, technologies and processes of companies in the region as well as create a steady stream of startup companies by building a globally competitive industrial commons in the community. Additionally, the Commercialization Center can work closely with the corporate and/or manufacturing community around targeted, job-driven workforce skills that these new industries will require.
- **Scenario 3:** A region has seen the decline of the historic industries (such as manufacturing or agriculture) that drove its development and growth. It is developing a strategic plan to revitalize itself through innovation and entrepreneurship. A Proof of Concept Center can become a hub for regionally-focused innovative solutions that help solve local problems and encourage exporting as a strategic growth opportunity while fostering entrepreneurship to create jobs
- **Scenario 4:** A region has identified federal research labs and a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem as key local assets. A regional incubator with a strong community of entrepreneurs forms partnerships with these labs to bring entrepreneurs and innovators together to explore novel ways to accelerate the commercial success of their technologies.

### C. **Science and Research Park Development Grants**

The concepts of Science and Research Parks are not new, but their impact in economic development is growing. By providing a hub for collaborative research, development, and innovation commercialization, these parks, when inclusive of the diverse stakeholders a high-functioning system of innovation system requires, can drive job creation and increase regional competitiveness on an international level. In fact, well-designed Science and Research Parks can support the entire life-cycle of commercialization, from idea generation to business creation through startup and growth, thereby significantly bolstering the health of the regional economy.

#### 1. **What is a Science and Research Park?**

For purposes of this grant program, the terms Science and Research Park or Science Park, means a property-based venture, which has:



- a) master-planned property and buildings designed primarily for private-public research and development activities, high technology and science-based companies, and research and development support services;
- b) a contractual or operational relationship with one or more science- or research-related institutions of higher education or governmental or nonprofit research laboratories;
- c) a primary mission to promote research and development through industry partnerships, assisting in the growth of new ventures and promoting innovation driven economic development;
- d) a role in facilitating the transfer of technology and business skills between researchers and industry teams; and
- e) a role in promoting technology-led economic development for the community or region in which the science park is located. A science park may be owned by a governmental or not-for-profit entity, but it may enter into partnerships or joint ventures with for-profit entities for development or management of specific components of the park.

## **2. Requirements for Science and Research Park Development Grant Projects**

EDA expects to fund proposals to conduct feasibility projects, planning projects, or both, for the construction of new science and research parks or the expansion or renovation of existing science and research parks. There is no funding for actual construction included in this funding opportunity.

In their proposal, applicants should outline their expectations and approach for the proposed feasibility study or plan. Elements of the study or plan being proposed should, at a minimum, address:

- a) The effect the science park will have on regional economic growth and development;
- b) Number of jobs to be created at the science park and the surrounding regional community each year during the first three years after construction is completed;
- c) Access to needed capital and types to fund the development, expansion, or renovation of the science park (for new parks, applicants must show reasonable availability of rough projected costs over the first three years);
- d) Types of businesses and research entities to locate in (or already located in) the science park. For an existing research park, discuss the incremental economic benefit of the renovation or expansion;
- e) Letters of Intent by businesses and research entities to locate in a proposed park or expansion;
- f) Capability to attract a well-trained workforce to the science park;
- g) Management of the science park (for new parks, this should be a 5-year projection);
- h) A consideration of any risks (financial and operational) in the construction and operation of the park with an intent to develop risk mitigation strategies;
- i) Opportunities to collaborate with other science parks throughout the world;
- j) Sufficiency of physical infrastructure available to the science park including roads, utilities and telecommunications;
- k) Opportunities to utilize energy-efficient building technologies including nationally recognized green building design practices, renewable energy, cogeneration, and other methods that increase energy efficiency and conservation;

- l) Opportunities to reuse or redevelop existing infrastructure, including military bases affected by the base realignment and closure process or the redevelopment of existing buildings, structures, or brownfield sites that are abandoned, idled, or underused; and
- m) Opportunities to incorporate sustainable business practices as well as consideration for quality of life at the science park.

All applications should avoid any duplication of existing efforts, or supplanting existing or budgeted efforts. Specific evaluation criteria can be found in section V.A. of this FFO.

#### **D. Cluster Grants for Seed Funds**

An important element of a regional innovation strategy is the availability of funding for early stage companies. Often, taking an idea or innovation from conception to market requires hard-to-find capital. Because of this, it is referred to as one of many “valley of death” points in the entrepreneurial process.

For FY 2014, EDA is looking to provide funding for technical assistance to support feasibility, planning, formation, or launch of cluster-based seed capital funds to be deployed in support of innovation-based startups with a potential for high growth. While the Small Business Association’s (SBA’s) Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) program funds ultimately pass to startup companies, funding awarded through the seed capital funds will instead seek to create sustainable financing institutions for those startups. Applicants may request funding to support seed capital funding programs and direct supporting programs as outlined below. EDA will collaborate with the SBA through the evaluation process to ensure the seed capital funding complements other federal economic development programs and does not duplicate existing programs.

##### **1. Requirements for Cluster Grants for Seed Capital Funds**

Funding may be used for technical assistance, feasibility studies, or marketing related to the operation of programs that meet the following criteria:

- a) Seed capital support for innovation-based, growth-oriented companies
 

The program must focus on new businesses (generally less than three years old) that are commercializing or using an innovative technology in the development of their product or service. Companies must also have demonstrated potential for high-growth and include performance targets for job creation.
- b) Plan for Sustainability
 

Programs must include provisions for sustainability through measures such as taking an equity stake in, or collecting royalties from, the businesses they are supporting.
- c) Demonstrated ecosystem and down-stream support
 

Ties into the community are a critical element of success for nascent companies. Successful seed-level funding programs provide for further development of companies they invest in by building and maintaining connections to support organizations such as commercialization centers, incubators and other training

programs. Additionally important are connections with down-stream funding sources to support the next phase of growth and capital needs of portfolio companies.

Additional consideration will be given to programs which support innovations in manufacturing and programs that specifically serve businesses with a strong potential to export their goods or services. Applications for funding that duplicates assistance already provided by the SBA or any other Federal agency will not be considered competitive.

## **2. Cluster Grants for Seed Funds Examples**

The following are examples of the types of projects that could be funded through this competition. Please note that these scenarios are informational only and are intended to provide applicants with a clearer picture of how this opportunity is intended to function. These examples in no way limit the range of potential proposed projects, combinations of eligible applicants, or anchoring organizations.

- **Scenario 1:** A consortia of local and regional economic development organizations and municipalities is interested in generating more innovation around a particular challenge in the region. They offer a “call for startups” to develop creative solutions with a demonstrated strong case for commercial potential and offer seed-based funding and startup support as part of a competition. The proposal requests funding for personnel to set up and build the fund, and to market and advertise the program once it has been created.
- **Scenario 2:** A state or municipality has established a seed fund and desires to improve the probability of greater outcomes by providing technical assistance to the companies they invest in (their portfolio companies). They request a grant to provide specific assistance to their portfolio companies focused on sustainability and growth and/or technical assistance to establish and provide seed capital funding to startups.
- **Scenario 3:** A regional foundation focused on preventative health care for underserved communities would like to see more startups creating solutions helping to solve specific problems in their domain. They request funding to conduct a study to determine size, scope and feasibility for setting up a seed fund to support startups who are innovating in their target space.

### **E. Statutory authorities for the Regional Innovation Strategies Program**

The statutory authority for the RIS Program is section 27 of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 (15 U.S.C. § 3722; P.L. 111-358), amending the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. § 3721 *et seq.*).

EDA expects to update its regulations to reflect the applicant eligibility and program requirements for the RIS Program in the future.

## **II. Award information**

### **A. What funding is available under this announcement?**

The funding periods and funding amounts referenced in this notice are subject to the availability of funds at the time of award, as well as to DOC and EDA priorities at the time of award. Neither DOC nor EDA will be held responsible for application preparation costs. Publication of this announcement does not obligate DOC or EDA to award any specific grant or cooperative agreement or to obligate all or any part of available funds. Subject to the availability of funding, EDA expects to allocate funds as follows:

#### **1. FY 2014 i6 Challenge**

Up to \$8 million for the FY 2014 i6 Challenge, from which EDA expects to award approximately 16 or more grants each valued at a maximum of \$500,000.

#### **2. Science and Research Park Development Grants**

Up to \$5 million for Science and Research Park Development Grants in FY 2014, from which EDA expects to award approximately 10 or more grants each valued at a maximum of \$500,000.

#### **3. Cluster Grants for Seed Funds**

Up to \$2 million for Cluster Grants for Seed Funds, from which EDA expects to award approximately 8 or more grants each valued at a maximum of \$250,000.

Applications for renewal or supplementation of existing projects are eligible to compete with applications for new awards under each of these three competitions.

### **B. What type of funding instrument will be used to make awards and how long will project periods be?**

Subject to the availability of funds, EDA may award grants or cooperative agreements to eligible applicants to help support activities. If the funding instrument to be used is a cooperative agreement, the nature of EDA's "substantial involvement" will generally be collaboration between EDA and the recipient on the scope of work. Additional forms of substantial involvement that may arise are described in Chapter 5.C of the DOC Grants and Cooperative Agreements Manual, which is available at [http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants\\_management/policy/documents/FINAL Master DOC Grants Manual 2013 \(03.01.13\)\\_b.pdf](http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/FINAL Master DOC Grants Manual 2013 (03.01.13)_b.pdf).

Project periods are dependent on the type of project, scope of work, and the EDA program under which the grant for the project is awarded. *See* section VI.A. of this FFO for award notification information.

- For the i6 Challenge, the anticipated award will have an initial project period of three years with an estimated start date on or about 120 days after the closing date of this FFO.

- For the Science and Research Park Development Grant competition, the anticipated award will have an initial project period of twelve months with an estimated start date on or about 120 days after the closing date of this FFO.
- For the Cluster Grants competition, the anticipated award will have an initial project period of two years with an estimated start date on or about 120 days after the closing date of this FFO.

EDA expects all projects to proceed efficiently and expeditiously, and EDA expects applicants to clearly document a reasonable and appropriate timeline for the start and completion of the proposed scope of work.

### **III. Eligibility Information**

#### **A. Eligible Applicants**

EDA is **not** authorized to provide grants or cooperative agreements to individuals, and such requests will not be considered for funding.

Pursuant to the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010, eligible applicants for and eligible recipients of EDA investment assistance under this FFO include a(n):

1. a State;
2. an Indian tribe;
3. a city or other political subdivision of a State;
4. an entity that—
  - a. is a nonprofit organization, an institution of higher education, a public-private partnership, a science or research park, a Federal laboratory, or an economic development organization or similar entity; and
  - b. has an application that is supported by a State or a political subdivision of a State; or
5. a consortium of any of the entities described in subparagraphs (1) through (4).

For Science and Research Park Development Grants *only*, in addition to the types of applicants listed above, the following applicants are also eligible to apply:

6. a Hospital;
7. a Commercial organization; or
8. a consortium of any of the entities described in subparagraphs (1) through (7).

Please note that while commercial organizations are eligible entities for Science and Research Park Development grants, in evaluating applications, EDA will provide preference to organizations and consortia that demonstrate regional collaboration and the ability to leverage and complement existing state, local, and non-profit organization programs and initiatives that support science and research, such as university-based programs, National Laboratories, etc. *See* section V.A.2.b.

## B. Cost Sharing or Matching

### 1. FY 2014 i6 Challenge and Cluster Grants

Under this FFO, applicants must demonstrate **at the time of application** a matching share from non-Federal<sup>4</sup> sources. The applicant must show that the matching share will: (i) be committed to the project for the project period, (ii) be available as needed, and (iii) not be conditioned or encumbered in any way that may preclude its use consistent with the requirements of EDA investment assistance. EDA will give preference to applications with higher matching shares, which further leverage Federal funds and help ensure additional project impact. For applicants applying for the i6 Challenge and the Cluster Grant competitions, a separate match is required for each project. For these two competitions, **the amount of an EDA grant may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of each project.**

In the application review process, EDA will consider the nature of the contribution (cash or in-kind) and the amount of the matching share funds. In-kind contributions may provide the required non-Federal share of the total project cost and can consist of contributions directly related to the proposed project, such as space, equipment, services, or forgiveness or assumptions of debt. EDA will fairly evaluate all in-kind contributions, which must be eligible project costs and meet applicable Federal cost principles and uniform administrative requirements.

Applicants are ***strongly*** encouraged to work with the appropriate EDA representative listed in Section VIII. of this FFO to determine how in-kind contributions can be utilized to satisfy the matching share requirement for their respective project concept and application. Please note that because EDA funds cannot be used as venture capital or as an equity investment, the matching share may not include venture capital or equity.

### 2. Science and Research Park Development Grants

Cost sharing or matching are not required for an EDA award for Science and Research Park Development Grants.

## IV. Application and Submission Information

### A. How to Obtain an Application Package

An applicant may obtain the appropriate application package electronically at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) (Grants.gov). Applicants may search for this funding opportunity on Grants.gov using Funding Opportunity Number “**EDA-HDQ-OIE-2014-2004219**.” All components of the appropriate application package may be accessed and downloaded (in a screen-fillable format) at [www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html). The preferred electronic file format for attachments is Adobe portable document format (PDF); however, EDA will accept electronic files in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or Microsoft Excel. *Applicants are*

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<sup>4</sup> Funds from other Federal financial assistance awards are considered matching share funds only if authorized by statute, which may be determined by EDA’s reasonable interpretation of the statute.

*advised that they must complete the registration process prior to submitting an application through Grants.gov; however, please note that registration is not required for an applicant to access, view, or download the application package.* Even though an applicant may be able to view and download an application, if the applicant has not correctly completed the Grants.gov registration process, the applicant will not be able to submit the application for EDA's review.

## **B. Content and Form of Application Submission**

### **1. What is required for a complete application?**

In order to be considered for funding, applicants must submit a complete application package for each competition to which they are applying that includes all required documents outlined below by the applicable deadline. All documentation and data submitted as part of the application package should be current and applicable.

All applications must include the following documents:

- i. One **Form SF-424** (Application for Federal Assistance) from each co-applicant, as applicable.
- ii. One **Form SF-424A** (Budget Information-Non-Construction Programs). One form per application is required. Applicants should ensure that the SF-424A reflects a distinct budget for each competition for which the applicant is applying.
- iii. One **Form SF-424 B** (Assurances-Non-Construction Programs) from each co-applicant, as applicable.
- iv. One **Form CD-511** (Certification Regarding Lobbying) from each co-applicant, as applicable.
- v. One **Form SF-LLL** (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities) from each co-applicant, as applicable.
- vi. A **Project Narrative** of no more than 12 single-sided pages using at least 11 point font size (see section IV.B.2. of this FFO for additional information).
- vii. **If the applicant or co-applicant is a non-profit**, a copy of the (1) **Certificate of good standing** from the State in which the non-profit organization is incorporated; (2) non-profit organization's current **Articles of Incorporation** or other formation documents, as applicable; (3) **By-Laws**; and (4) **resolution (or letter)** from a general purpose subdivision of State government acknowledging that the non-profit organization is acting in cooperation with officials of that political subdivision (*see* 13 C.F.R. § 301.2).
- viii. **If the applicant or co-applicant is a for-profit**, a copy of the (1) **Certificate of good standing** from the State in which the for-profit organization is incorporated; (2) for-profit organization's current **Articles**

**of Incorporation** or other formation documents, as applicable; and (3) **By-Laws**.

- ix. **Comments from the State Clearinghouse** to comply with Executive Order 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs,” if applicable. If the comment period has not expired or comments were not received, a copy of the applicant’s request for comments is sufficient; however, in that instance, the final determination will be required prior to award. Detailed information on the State Clearinghouse process can be accessed at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_spoc](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc).

All application forms submitted through Grants.gov must be signed electronically by an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR); please *see* section IX. of this FFO for information on AOR requirements. Please refer to important information on submitting your application provided in section IV.D. of this FFO.

## **2. Requirements for the Project Narrative**

As outlined in section IV.B.1. of this FFO, all applicants must provide a project narrative in order to be considered for funding. Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide a high-quality narrative that includes a compelling justification for the project and articulates a clearly defined regional economic gap, how the proposed project will uniquely meet this need, and the expected outcome(s) that will result from the proposed project. This should be addressed in a concise manner; lengthy applications will not receive greater consideration. A competitive application will address the following elements in the project narrative:

- a. **Description of project region, location, and impact:** Applicants must clearly describe the Region where the project will be located, including the specific geographic location of the project within the Region, as well as background on the assets of the area, which may include clusters, workforce, and physical-, educational- and financial-infrastructure. If the impact is expected to expand beyond the noted region that should be detailed as well.
- b. **Clear description of proposed project:** Applicants must clearly document the concrete activities that will be undertaken, and the specific deliverables that will be produced as a result of this investment. The description of the proposed project must include: a clear statement of the overall purpose of the project; the role of each applicant, co-applicant, and key personnel (including a description of their qualifications or an approximately 1 - 2 page resume for each key person); and key milestones, an associated schedule for when the project could start, when key milestones could be achieved, and when the project is anticipated to be completed.
- c. **Documentation supporting the budget request:** Applicants must provide a clear budget justification that identifies how funds in each line item of the budget will be utilized to support the proposed project. The non-Federal share, whether in cash or in-kind, is expected to be paid out at the same general rate as the Federal share; however, if the applicant’s budget proposes otherwise, applicants must also include information that clearly indicates what project elements the matching share funds will support. Finally, the applicant



must submit supporting documentation to indicate these funds are unencumbered, unrestricted and committed to support the proposed project.

- d. **Documentation on anticipated project impacts:** Applicants must provide a clear and compelling justification of the long-term potential economic impact of the proposed project, through anticipated job creation or retention, private investment leveraging, number of businesses or collaborations supported, or other appropriate measures. All job and private investment leverage estimates should reflect the anticipated impact five years after the potential EDA investments. For all other measures, applicants should clearly identify the applicable time-frame. In all cases, applicants must document the benefit and provide third-party data or information available to support these claims.

### C. **Deadlines for submission**

The closing date for receipt of applications for funding under this FFO is **Monday, November 3, 2014**.

Applications submitted electronically via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) (Grants.gov) must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on **Monday, November 3, 2014**. The date and time that an application will be deemed to be electronically received will be determined in accordance with the electronic submission instructions provided at Grants.gov for this FFO. *See* sections IV.D. and IX. of this FFO for information regarding electronic submissions. **Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.**

In addition, please note the following:

- EDA will not accept any unsolicited changes, additions, revisions, or deletions to applications after the submission deadline.
- Throughout the review and selection process, EDA reserves the right to seek clarification in writing from applicants whose applications are being reviewed and considered.
- Applicants may be asked to clarify objectives and work plans and modify budgets or other specifics necessary to comply with Federal requirements and provide supplemental information required by the agency before award.
- *See* section V. of this FFO for application review and selection information.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to start early and not to wait until the approaching application deadline before logging on and reviewing the instructions for submitting an application through Grants.gov. Applicants should save and print written proof of an electronic submission made at Grants.gov. If problems occur while using Grants.gov, the applicant is advised to (i) print any error message received; and (ii) call Grants.gov at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance. EDA may allow more time for application submission due to a “systems issue” at Grants.gov that is beyond the control of the applicant. *See* section IV.D and section IX. of this FFO for more information on electronic submissions.

### D. **How to submit an application**

Applications must be submitted through Grants.gov. EDA will not accept paper, facsimile or email transmissions of applications for this program. Applications must be successfully validated and time-stamped by Grants.gov no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on

the deadline listed in section IV.C. of this FFO. An application that is not validated and time-stamped by Grants.gov by the deadline will not be reviewed.

Once an application is submitted, it undergoes a validation process through Grants.gov during which the application may be accepted or rejected by the system. Please be advised that the validation process may take 24 to 48 hours to complete. Applications that contain errors will be rejected by Grants.gov, and will not be forwarded to EDA for review. The applicant must correct the error before Grants.gov will accept and validate the application. EDA will not accept late applications that were rejected by Grants.gov due to applicant errors. Accordingly, **EDA strongly suggests that applicants submit their applications at least five days before the deadline** to allow the application to be accepted and validated in the system and to allow time for any errors to be corrected. EDA will consider the time-stamp on the validation from Grants.gov as the official submission time.

**Please see section IX. of this FFO for more detailed instructions and information on the requirements for submitting applications electronically via Grants.gov.**

## **V. Application Review and Selection Process**

Throughout the review and selection process, EDA reserves the right to seek clarification in writing from applicants whose applications are being reviewed and considered. EDA may ask applicants to clarify application materials, objectives, and work plans, or modify budgets or other specifics necessary to comply with Federal requirements.

### **A. Evaluation Criteria**

For each program, the following factors will be considered by members of the Merit Review Panels to judge applications. Evaluation criteria for each program will be scored independently. Applicants that apply for all sources of funds may not necessarily receive favorable consideration for each competition. NOTE: Each factor will be weighted as indicated for a total possible score of 100 points under each competition.

#### **1. FY 2014 i6 Challenge**

All applicants are expected to provide a clear and detailed explanation as to how the proposed project will meet the i6 Challenge evaluation criteria. EDA will consider applications that include such an explanation with supporting data (including performance measures and deliverables, as applicable) more competitive than those that do not include supporting data.

For the FY 2014 i6 Challenge, the following five factors will be considered. Each factor will be weighted as indicated for a total possible score of 100 points.

##### **a) Approach (25 points)**

Applications will be evaluated based on their plan to effectively use the proposed project as described in Section I.B. of this FFO to address their regional innovation and entrepreneurial needs. Moreover, the application should present a clear, specific, and realistic approach to accelerating the movement of innovative ideas to the marketplace, such as innovation in the areas of energy, life sciences, information technology, health care, education, innovative

manufacturing, telecommunications or social innovation. This will be evaluated to the extent an application demonstrates:

- A clear understanding of a real or persistent problem facing the region's entrepreneurs and innovators or an unaddressed opportunity, its urgency, and the ability of the proposed model to solve the problem or capitalize on the opportunity;
- Creative or even potentially transformative models or solutions based on an understanding of the role, benefit, and best practices of proposed project; and
- A plan including documented task oriented deadlines for how the proposed project would nurture innovation, entrepreneurship and commercialization of ideas.

Additional consideration will be given to programs which support innovations in manufacturing and businesses with a strong potential to export their goods or services.

#### **b) Feasibility of Implementation - Plan (25 points)**

Applications must show that establishing or enhancing the capabilities of a Proof of Concept Center or Commercialization Center and its accompanying features is a likely outcome from i6 Challenge funding. This will be evaluated to the extent an application demonstrates:

- A coherent plan to leverage regional strengths, mitigate regional weaknesses, and capitalize on strategic opportunities and resources while minimizing short- and long-term challenges;
- The ability to leverage and complement existing state, local, and non-profit organization programs and initiatives that support innovation and entrepreneurship, such as Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), business incubators, or university programs, etc.;
- A sound strategy to support entrepreneurs and innovators at appropriate phase(s) of the process, such as assessments of market, societal and organizational potential, patenting, licensing, venture formation, financing, and marketing;
- A reasoned intellectual property strategy appropriate for leveraging the core creative and technological attributes of employees, organizations, existing companies, and new venture formations that will utilize the programs and services of the Proof of Concept Center or Commercialization Center;
- Completeness of the proposed schedule and budget, including the extent to which appropriate targets, metrics, and milestones are clearly defined;
- Strength of regional collaboration and interest in the concept as demonstrated by willingness of partners to contribute resources (financial or in-kind);
- Strength of the plan to measure progress toward targets and the likelihood that metrics and milestones will be met;
- Extent to which challenges and risks are identified and mitigation strategies are proposed; and
- Strength of the proposed organization and management plan to achieve the project goals.

#### **c) Feasibility of Implementation - Personnel Qualifications and Resources (15 points)**

Applications will be evaluated in terms of the qualifications of the team, participating organizations, key personnel, and other proposed resources, including:

- Qualified personnel that, as a group, demonstrate project management expertise, as well as demonstrated success in protecting, licensing, and commercializing intellectual property;
- The education, experience, and professional accomplishments of key personnel;
- Adequacy of the applicant's team to carry out the proposed work and achieve success;
- Previous performance of the organizations making up the team, as applicable;
- Quality of the partnerships and extent of partnership commitments;
- Appropriateness, quality, and availability of any facilities, materials and resources to be used in implementing the proposed plan; and
- Access to financing, in various forms, for promising entrepreneurs.

**d) Feasibility of Implementation - Sustainability (10 points)**

Applications will be evaluated on the applicant organization's plan for sustaining success of the Proof of Concept Center or Commercialization Center beyond the period of Federal funding, including:

- Adequate financial resources to ensure robust institutional capacity, as well as access to capital for early stage, potentially high-growth firms;
- Strong potential to become self-sustaining, even without significant future Federal funding; and
- Long-term, broad, and deep commitment from private and public sector leaders throughout the region, and strong participation and buy-in from stakeholders.

**e) Impact (25 points)**

Applications must demonstrate the job creation impact of the proposed Proof of Concept Center or Commercialization Center. They will be evaluated to the extent that the application identifies and explains:

- Quantifiable outputs and outcomes that benefit the regional economy and are linked to achieving the objectives identified in this FFO announcement; and
- The extent to which infrastructure for innovation, commercialization and enterprise formation will be enhanced.

In order to clearly demonstrate these impacts, applicants should include practical and clear tracking and reporting mechanisms for outputs and outcomes that they expect to achieve as a result of the proposed project, which demonstrate:

- Relevance to the proposed scope of work and the requirements as described in Section I.B. of this FFO;
- Quality and reasonableness with respect to the project plan;
- A strong methodology to capture, report, and track progress against identified metrics and milestones; and
- Reasonable use of available data to drive the development of baselines and projections of overall impacts.

Applicants are encouraged to consider a broad range of relevant output and outcome measures in developing their proposed scope of work. Examples of such output and outcome measures include:

**Output measures** such as: number of events (such as networking or mentoring sessions) held; number of boot camps held; number of new facilities established; number of technologies licensed or commercialized; number of patents which gained government approval; number of Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) proposals supported; number of participants gaining new certifications or degrees; number of participants with new partnerships; or number of loans obtained.

**Outcome measures** such as: number of new Angel investments or Venture Capital investments in supported firms; number of new firms developed; number of new products launched by participants; percent of participants reporting new skills acquired from events or boot camps; percent of participants reporting using new skills to support continued activities; or percent of participants reporting new or increased exports.

## **2. Science and Research Park Development Grants**

All applicants are expected to provide a clear and detailed explanation as to how the proposed project will meet the evaluation criteria below. EDA will consider applications that include such an explanation with supporting data (including performance measures and deliverables, as applicable) more competitive than those that do not include supporting data.

For Science and Research Park Development Grants, applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the proposed plan or feasibility study meets the following criteria in its scope of work. Each factor will be weighted as indicated for a total possible score of 100 points.

### **a) Economic Opportunity (25 points)**

While economic distress in a region is not required for this grant, applicants should provide a compelling case for economic investment. Preference will be given to projects that show the opportunity for economic development, expansion and/or growth. An application will be evaluated to the extent it demonstrates:

- A compelling opportunity for creation, expansion, or renovation of the science park supported by available or planned resources to drive regional economic growth; and
- The need for and probability of the creation of jobs during the science park's first 3 years of operation (post-construction, not including jobs created as a result of the construction itself). Strong applications will provide estimates based on evidence from companies providing letters of support or letters of commitment.

### **b) Feasibility of Implementation (15 points)**

Having regional support of multiple stakeholders increases the chances that the next phase of the project, if found feasible, will be implemented. Preference will be given to applications that demonstrate regional collaboration and the ability to leverage and complement existing state, local, and non-profit organization programs and initiatives that support science and research, such as university-based programs, National Laboratories, etc. The strength of the proposal will consider availability and types of funding for follow-on construction and focus on long-term sustainability.

c) **Approach (30 points)**

Proposals will be evaluated on the extent to which they meet the required considerations laid out in this FFO, including considerations for work force availability, ongoing management of the science park, as well as approach to conservation, sustainability, and quality of life. *See* section I.C. of this FFO for more information regarding required elements of Science and Research Park Development Grant proposals.

d) **Community and Infrastructure Support (30 points)**

A strong indicator of success of any community project is the extent to which the surrounding ecosystem and infrastructure are in place to provide support. This includes research partners and businesses willing to support the effort, start new operations, or expand into the community, as well as presence of physical and technological infrastructure. A strong application will include commitments from cluster members and stakeholders to participate in developing the planned focus of the science park or research park.

**3. Cluster Grants for Seed Funds**

All applicants are expected to provide a clear and detailed explanation as to how the proposed project will meet the evaluation criteria below. EDA will consider applications that include such an explanation with supporting data (including performance measures and deliverables, as applicable) more competitive than those that do not include supporting data.

For Cluster Grants for Seed Funds, applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the proposed program and requested support meet the following criteria. Each factor will be weighted as indicated for a total possible score of 100 points.

a) **Program Focus and Structure (25 points)**

Proposals will be evaluated on:

- Company selection criteria and process;
- Ongoing evaluation and support of selected companies;
- Sustainability plan;
- The education, experience, and accomplishments of key personnel;
- Demonstrated ability of the applicant's team to carry out the proposed work and achieve success;
- Previous performance of the organizations making up the team, as applicable;

Additional consideration will be given to programs which support innovations in manufacturing and businesses with a strong potential to export their goods or services.

b) **Approach (15 points)**

Proposals will be evaluated on their effective use and leverage of the funding provided by this program.

c) **Community and Infrastructure Support (30 points)**

Strong proposals will have organizations and individual investors submitting letters of intent to invest in the fund if it is not already developed. Strong candidates will have additional connections into the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem as demonstrated by letters of support from downstream investment sources, commercialization centers, incubators, accelerators, and/or the general business community to support the development of portfolio

companies. Additionally, proposals that leverage and complement existing state, local, and non-profit organization programs and initiatives that support innovation and entrepreneurship, such as SBDCs, business incubators, or university programs, etc., will be considered more competitive than those that do not.

**d) Impact (30 points)**

Preference will be given to applicants that demonstrate the potential for job creation as a result of the Seed Capital Fund. Strong applications will demonstrate quantifiable benefits to the regional economy.

In addition, applications will be evaluated on the extent to which applicants propose to develop practical and clear tracking and reporting mechanisms for outputs and outcomes which are linked to achieving the objectives identified in this FFO announcement.

**B. Review and Selection Process**

As set forth below, EDA staff will review all applications received to ensure that they are complete and eligible to receive funding.

**1. Review for eligibility and completeness**

EDA staff will conduct an eligibility and technical completeness review of all applications received by the application deadline. Applications received from ineligible entities will not be considered for funding. Additionally, applications that do not contain all forms and required documentation listed in section IV.B. of this FFO may be deemed non-responsive and excluded from further consideration. EDA expects all applicants to complete and include all required forms and documentation. However, EDA, in its sole discretion, may determine that an omission is a non-substantive technical deficiency if it can easily and quickly be rectified or cured, and therefore, may continue its consideration of the application despite the deficiency. Eligibility and technical completeness requirements will be conducted separately for each competition; an applicant that does not meet requirements for one competition will not be precluded from any other competitions for which it applied, provided the requirements for those competitions are met.

**2. Merit Review Panels**

Merit Review Panels, comprised of at least three Federal employees, will evaluate the applications against the evaluation criteria enumerated in section VI.A. of this FFO and award up to 100 points to each application for each competition. Application scores will be determined by each panelist on an individual basis, and the average of the individual ratings will produce a panel score. For each competition, the Merit Review Panels will prepare a priority funding order for the applications—based on its consideration of the evaluation criteria—and recommend to the EDA Grants Officer, in such priority order, those applications that merit consideration for EDA funding.

**3. Grants Officer's Decision**

The Merit Review Panels' recommendations will be forwarded to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs, who is the Grants Officer under this announcement. The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs has been delegated the authority to make the final

decision on whether to fund an application and may select a project for funding that differs from the Merit Review Panels' priority recommendations based on any of the following Selection Factors or use these Selection Factors to break a tie for applications that are otherwise considered equal in merit:

1. The extent to which the application meets the overall objectives of section 27 of America COMPETES;
2. The ability of a project to start quickly;
3. The applicant's performance under previous Federal financial assistance awards, including whether the grantee submitted required performance reports and data;
4. For previous grantees, the extent to which the application builds upon and creates synergies with previously funded work;
5. For applicants to multiple competitions under this FFO, the extent to which the proposal leverages dollars across the multiple programs to make their overall approach stronger.
6. The extent to which the project may assist communities negatively impacted by trade;
7. The extent to which the applicant intends to collaborate with local workforce investment area boards;
8. The availability of program funding; and
9. The extent to which the project supports EDA's goals of geographic balance in distribution of program funds, project types, organizational type (to include smaller and rural organizations) and the overall portfolio.

The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs' final decision must be consistent with EDA's and DOC's published policies. Should the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs make a selection that differs from the Merit Review Panels' ranked applications, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Regional Affairs will document the rationale for the decision in writing.

## **VI. Award Administration Information**

### **A. Award notification**

Under this FFO, EDA expects to notify applicants of its decision in writing within 90 days of the application deadline. If an application is selected for funding, the EDA Grants Officer will issue the signed grant award (Form CD-450), which is the authorizing financial assistance award document and includes the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions. A sample Form CD-450 is available at [http://ocio.os.doc.gov/s/groups/public/@doc/@os/@ocio/@oitpp/documents/content/dev01\\_002513.pdf](http://ocio.os.doc.gov/s/groups/public/@doc/@os/@ocio/@oitpp/documents/content/dev01_002513.pdf) and the DOC Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions (January 2013) are available at [http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants\\_management/policy/documents/DOC\\_Standard\\_Terms\\_and\\_Conditions\\_01\\_10\\_2013.pdf](http://www.osec.doc.gov/oam/grants_management/policy/documents/DOC_Standard_Terms_and_Conditions_01_10_2013.pdf).

By signing Form CD-450, the recipient agrees to comply with all award provisions. EDA will provide Form CD-450 by mail or two-day delivery to the appropriate business office of the



recipient's organization. The recipient must sign and return the Form CD-450 without modification within 30 days of the date of EDA's signature on the form.

If an applicant is awarded funding, neither DOC nor EDA is under any obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with that award or to make any future award(s). Amendment or renewal of an award to increase funding or to extend the period of performance is at the discretion of DOC and EDA.

EDA will notify unsuccessful applicants in writing. EDA will retain unsuccessful applications in accordance with EDA's record retention schedule.

#### **B. Administrative and national policy requirements**

Administrative and national policy requirements for all DOC awards apply to this competition. These requirements may be found in the "Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements," published in the *Federal Register* on December 17, 2012 (77 FR 74634). This notice may be accessed at the Government Printing Office (GPO) website at [www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-12-17/pdf/2012-30228.pdf](http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-12-17/pdf/2012-30228.pdf).

#### **C. Reporting requirements**

1. All recipients are required to submit financial, performance, and impact reports in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant award, generally no less than semi-annually. All project progress and financial reports must be submitted to the applicable EDA program officer in electronic format. Recipients will be required to provide updates on their progress towards meeting any output and outcome measures identified in their application, as well as any other metrics requested by EDA and identified in the grant special award conditions.
2. The Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 includes a requirement for awardees of applicable Federal grants to report information about first-tier subawards and executive compensation under Federal assistance awards issued in FY 2011 or later. All awardees of applicable grants and cooperative agreements are required to report to the Federal Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) available at [www.FSRS.gov](http://www.FSRS.gov) on all sub-awards over \$25,000. Please see the OMB guidance published at 2 C.F.R. part 170 (2014), which can be accessed at [http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170_main_02.tpl).
3. EDA may require additional data on actual impact of the funded investment, pursuant to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), to be submitted to EDA up to nine years after the grant award.

#### **D. Regulations, administrative requirements, and cost principles**

Specific regulations, administrative requirements, and cost principles govern the use of EDA funds. The general and administrative requirements for EDA awards are set forth in 13 C.F.R. parts 300–302. Specific application and award requirements for the Public Works program are set out at 13 C.F.R. part 305 and for the EAA program in subpart A of 13 C.F.R. part 307. EDA funds may not be used directly or indirectly to reimburse any attorneys' or

consultants' fees incurred in connection with obtaining investment assistance pursuant to this competitive solicitation. *See* 13 C.F.R. § 302.10.

The uniform administrative requirements for DOC grants and cooperative agreements are currently codified at 15 C.F.R. parts 14 and 24, as applicable. Allowable costs under an EDA investment are determined in accordance with the following regulations (incorporated by reference at 15 C.F.R. parts 14 and 24): (i) 2 C.F.R. part 220, *Cost Principles for Educational Institutions (OMB Circular A-21)*; (ii) 2 C.F.R. part 225, *Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments (OMB Circular A-87)*; (iii) 2 C.F.R. part 230, *Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations (OMB Circular A-122)*; and (iv) Federal Acquisition Regulation Subpart 31.2, *Contracts with Commercial Organizations*, codified at 48 C.F.R. § 31.2. Applicable administrative requirements and Federal cost principles are incorporated by reference into the terms and conditions of each EDA award. Generally, costs that are allowable include salaries, supplies, and other expenses that are reasonable and necessary for the completion of the scope of work.

Please note that on December 26, 2013, OMB published final guidance titled *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (OMB Uniform Guidance)* (<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2013/12/26/2013-30465/uniform-administrative-requirements-cost-principles-and-audit-requirements-for-federal-awards>), which streamlines the language from eight existing OMB circulars, including *Cost Principles (OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, A-122)* and administrative requirements (*OMB Circulars A-102 and A-110*), into one consolidated set of guidance applicable to federal assistance awards. Once adopted, the *OMB Uniform Guidance* will supersede DOC's uniform administrative requirements set out at 15 C.F.R. parts 14 and 24. The DOC expects to adopt the *OMB Uniform Guidance* by December 26, 2014, meaning that the *OMB Uniform Guidance* will apply to all new awards and to additional funding to existing awards made after December 26, 2014. In addition, the audit requirements of the *OMB Uniform Guidance* will apply to audits of non-Federal entities beginning on or after December 26, 2014. Therefore, applicants should familiarize themselves with the *OMB Uniform Guidance*. Additional information on the substance of and transition to the *OMB Uniform Guidance* may be found at <https://cfo.gov/cofar/>.

#### **E. EDA's Non-relocation Policy**

Applicants are advised that should an application be selected for award, the recipient will be required to adhere to a special award condition relating to EDA's non-relocation policy as follows:

In signing this award of financial assistance, Recipient(s) attests that EDA funding is not intended by the Recipient to assist its efforts to induce the relocation of existing jobs within the U.S. that are located outside of its jurisdiction to within its jurisdiction in competition with other U.S. jurisdictions for those same jobs. In the event that EDA determines that its assistance was used for those purposes, EDA retains the right to pursue appropriate enforcement action in accord with the Standard Terms and Conditions of the Award, including suspension of disbursements and termination of the award for convenience or cause, which may include the establishment of a debt requiring the Recipient to reimburse EDA.

For purposes of ensuring that EDA assistance will not be used to merely transfer jobs from one location in the United States to another, each applicant must inform EDA of all employers that constitute primary beneficiaries of the project assisted by EDA. EDA will consider an employer to be a “primary beneficiary” if the applicant estimates that such employer will create or save 100 or more permanent jobs as a result of the investment assistance, provided that such employer also is specifically named in the application as benefiting from the project, or is or will be located in an EDA-assisted building, port, facility, or industrial, commercial, or business park constructed or improved in whole or in part with investment assistance prior to EDA’s final disbursement of funds. In smaller communities, EDA may extend this policy to the relocation of 50 or more jobs.

#### **F. OMB Circular A-133 audit requirements**

Single or program-specific audits shall be performed in accordance with the requirements contained in OMB Circular A-133, *Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations*, and the related *Compliance Supplement*. OMB Circular A-133 requires any non-Federal entity (i.e., non-profit organizations, including non-profit institutions of higher education and hospitals, states, local governments, and Indian Tribes) that expends federal awards of \$500,000<sup>5</sup> or more in the recipient’s fiscal year to conduct a single or program-specific audit in accordance with the requirements set out in the Circular. Applicants are reminded that EDA or the DOC’s Office of Inspector General also may conduct an audit of an award at any time.

### **VII. Other Information**

#### **A. Freedom of Information Act Disclosure**

The Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. § 552) (FOIA) and DOC’s implementing regulations at 15 C.F.R. part 4 set forth the rules and procedures to make requested material, information, and records publicly available. Unless prohibited by law and to the extent permitted under FOIA, contents of applications submitted by applicants may be released in response to FOIA requests. In the event that an application contains information or data that the applicant deems to be confidential commercial information, that information should be identified, bracketed, and marked as “Privileged, Confidential, Commercial or Financial Information.” Based on these markings, the confidentiality of the contents of those pages will be protected to the extent permitted by law.

#### **B. Past Performance and Non-Compliance with Award Provisions**

Unsatisfactory performance under prior Federal awards may result in an application not being considered for funding. Failure to comply with any or all of the provisions of an award may have a negative impact on future funding by the DOC (or any of its operating units) may be considered grounds for any or all of the following actions: (1) establishing an account

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<sup>5</sup> This amount increases to \$750,000 after December 26, 2014. 2 C.F.R. part 200. Administrative requirements and cost principles will apply to new awards and to additional funding (funding increments) to existing awards made after Dec 26, 2014. Subpart F, Audit requirements, will apply to audits of non-Federal entity fiscal years beginning on or after December 26, 2014.

receivable; (2) withholding payments to the recipient under any DOC award(s); (3) changing the method of payment from advance to reimbursement only; (4) imposing other special award conditions; (5) suspending any active DOC award(s); and (6) terminating any active DOC award(s).

#### **C. Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System, and Central Contractor Registration**

To enable the use of a universal identifier and to enhance the quality of information available to the public as required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006, to the extent applicable, any proposal awarded in response to this announcement will be required to use the Central Contractor Registration (CCR), now a part of the System for Award Management (SAM) and is located at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov), and Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS), and will be subject to reporting requirements, as identified in OMB guidance published at 2 C.F.R. parts 25 and 170 (2010). The guidance set out at 2 C.F.R. part 25 may be located at [http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr25\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr25_main_02.tpl), and the guidance set out at 2 C.F.R. part 170 may be located at [http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170\\_main\\_02.tpl](http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr170_main_02.tpl).

#### **D. Restrictions Governing Making Grants to Corporations Convicted of Felony Criminal Violations and/or Unpaid Federal Tax Liabilities**

Pursuant to sections 536 and 537 of Public Law 113-76, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014, execution by an applicant of the Representation by Corporations Regarding an Unpaid Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Conviction Under Any Federal Law (*see* Appendix A) will be required in a format requested by EDA before any award will be made under this FFO.

#### **E. Environmental and historic preservation requirements**

All applicants for EDA construction assistance (including design and engineering assistance) are required to provide adequate environmental information. Each application will be reviewed by EDA for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA). During the NEPA review process, applicants may be instructed to contact the designated State and/or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO/THPO), provide approvals from other governmental agencies, or provide more detailed environmental information. EDA, after compliance with requirements for consultation with Federally recognized Indian Tribes, may require applicants to participate in Tribal consultation, as necessary. The implementing regulations of NEPA require EDA to provide public notice of the availability of project-specific environmental documents, such as environmental impact statements, environmental assessments, findings of no significant impact, and records of decision, to the affected public.<sup>6</sup> For further guidance and information, please contact the representative listed in section VIII. of this FFO.

#### **F. Intergovernmental review**

Applications submitted under this FFO are subject to the requirements of Executive Order (EO) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," if a State has adopted a process

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<sup>6</sup> As specified in 40 C.F.R. § 1506.6(b).

under EO 12372 to review and coordinate proposed Federal financial assistance and direct Federal development (commonly referred to as the “single point of contact review process”). All applicants must give State and local governments a reasonable opportunity to review and comment on the proposed Project, including review and comment from area-wide planning organizations in metropolitan areas.<sup>7</sup> To find out more about a State’s process under EO 12372, applicants may contact their State’s Single Point of Contact (SPOC). Names and addresses of some States’ SPOCs are listed on the Office of Management and Budget’s home page at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_spoc](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc). Question 19 of Form SF-424 allows applicants to demonstrate compliance with EO 12372.

#### **G. Implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

The U.S. Department of Justice has issued revised regulations implementing Title II of the ADA (28 C.F.R. part 35; 75 FR 56164, as amended by 76 FR 13285) and Title III of the ADA (28 C.F.R. part 36; 75 FR 56164, as amended by 76 FR 13286). The revised regulations adopted new enforceable accessibility standards called the “2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design” (2010 Standards). The 2010 Standards are an acceptable alternative to the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS). DOC deems compliance with the 2010 Standards to be an acceptable means of complying with the Section 504 accessibility requirements for new construction and alteration projects under 15 C.F.R. § 8b.18(c), as follows:

1. Public Recipients subject to Title II of the ADA may use either the 2010 Standards or UFAS where the physical construction or alternations commence on or after September 15, 2010 and before March 15, 2012 (*see* 28 C.F.R. § 35.151(c)(2)); and
2. Private Recipients subject to Title III of the ADA may use either the 2010 Standards or UFAS if the date when the last application for a building permit or permit extension is certified to be complete by a State, county, or local government (or, in those jurisdictions where the government does not certify completion of applications, if the date when the last application for a building permit or permit extension is received by the State, county, or local government) is on or after September 15, 2010 and before March 15, 2012, or if no permit is required, if the start of physical construction or alterations occurs on or after September 15, 2010 and before March 15, 2012 (*see* 28 C.F.R. § 36.406(a)(2)).

As of March 15, 2012, all new construction and alteration projects must comply with the 2010 Standards. In all cases, once a recipient selects an applicable ADA accessibility standard (i.e., the 2010 Standards or UFAS), that standard must be applied to the entire facility.

#### **VIII. EDA Contact Information**

For questions concerning this solicitation, or more information about EDA programs, you may contact:

Julie Lenzer Kirk  
oie@eda.gov  
(202) 482-2000

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<sup>7</sup> As provided for in 15 C.F.R. part 13.

## **IX. Instructions for Application Submission via Grants.gov**

**Register early and submit early.** In order to submit an application through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) (Grants.gov), an applicant must register for a Grants.gov user ID and password. Note that this process can take between three to five business days or as long as four weeks if all steps are not completed correctly. To avoid delays, EDA strongly recommends that applicants start early and not wait until the approaching deadline date before logging in, registering, reviewing the application instructions, and applying. Information about the Grants.gov registration process for organizations can be found at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>. Please note that organizations already registered with Grants.gov do not need to re-register; however, all registered organizations must keep their System for Award Management (SAM), which includes the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database, registration up-to-date through [sam.gov](http://sam.gov) or their applications will not be accepted by Grants.gov.

**AOR requirement.** Applicants must register as organizations, not as individuals. As part of the registration process, you will register at least one Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) for your organization. AORs registered at Grants.gov are the only officials with the authority to submit applications at Grants.gov so please ensure that your organization's application is submitted by an AOR. If the application is submitted by anyone other than your organization's AOR, it will be rejected by the Grants.gov system and cannot be considered by EDA. Note that a given organization may designate multiple individuals as AORs for Grants.gov purposes.

EDA will not accept late submissions caused by Grants.gov registration issues, including SAM and AOR issues.

Once an applicant is registered, the following list provides step-by-step instructions for accessing, completing and submitting an application via Grants.gov. Please also read the instructions posted at Grants.gov.

- a. Ensure that you have installed a compatible version of Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer, as incompatible versions of Adobe Acrobat Reader may cause errors. See <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/troubleshooting/verifying-adobe-reader.html>. Navigate to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and select "Apply for Grants" from the left-hand menu.
- b. Select the link for "Download a Grant Application" package.
- c. Enter Funding Opportunity Number "**EDA-HDQ-OIE-2014-2004219**" and click on "Download Package."
- d. Click on the "download" link under "Instructions and Application" for the instructions and application specific to the type of project and EDA program under which you are applying.
- e. A new window should pop up. In the new window, click on "Download Application Instructions" to review the instructions posted on Grants.gov and "Download Application Package" when you are ready to begin the application.
- f. Save the applicable application package to your computer or network drive. Note that the package file can be shared among multiple users; however, each user must

have a compatible version of Adobe Acrobat Reader installed in order to save changes to the application package.

- g. Click on each of the documents in the “Mandatory Documents” box and, after selecting each one, click on the arrow to move these into the “Mandatory Documents for Submission” box.
- h. In the “Optional Documents” box, click on Form SF-LLL if non-Federal funds have been or are planned to be used for lobbying in connection with this competitive solicitation and then move this to the “Optional Documents for Submission” box. If you will be submitting your application via Grants.gov, also click on “Attachments” and move this to the “Optional Documents for Submission” box. The Attachments form allows applicants to attach any documents required as attachments under this competitive solicitation, such as a CEDS or letters of support.
- i. The application package should pre-populate with all selected forms embedded. Complete all mandatory fields (highlighted in yellow) on the forms. Note that mandatory fields will vary based on the type of applicant and the type of assistance sought. On Form CD-511, type “not awarded yet” in the “project number” field. Save the application package at regular intervals to avoid losing work.
- j. Attach any required attachments. The preferred file format for attachments is portable document format (PDF); however, EDA will accept electronic files in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or Excel formats. ·
- k. When all mandatory fields have been completed, scroll to the top and click on “Check Package for Errors”.
- l. Click “Save”.
- m. Click “Save and Submit”. At this point the applicant’s AOR must be connected to the Internet and will be asked to enter their Grants.gov user id and password in order to submit via Grants.gov. As noted above, an AOR must submit the application for it to be validated by Grants.gov and received by EDA.

**Field limitations and special characters.** Please be advised that Grants.gov provides the following notice with respect to form field limitations and special characters:

**Are there restrictions on file names for any attachment I include with my application package?**

Please limit file names to 50 characters and do not use special characters (example: &,-,\*,%,/,#) in attachment names and application form fields (including periods (.), blank spaces and accent marks) or attaching documents with the same name. An underscore (example: my\_Attached\_File.pdf) may be used to separate a file name. Please note that if these guidelines are not followed, your application may be rejected.

**What kind of information can be entered into form fields within my application?**

Grants.gov application packages offer fields to enter a set amount of data. When the limit is reached for a certain field, you will no longer be able to enter data into that field. For every form, there are different limitations to the data that you are allowed to enter (this varies between agency and form). Refer to the agency instructions available for download with the application package for more detail.

Do not use special characters (example: &,-,\*,%,/,#) within the application form fields including periods (.), blank spaces and accent marks; an underscore may be used. Please note that if these guidelines are not followed, your application may be rejected.

In EDA's experience, use of apostrophes (') in file names and fillable fields of required forms has resulted in application submission issues. Accordingly, please periodically check the status of your application to make sure it has been validated, and use file naming conventions that do not negatively affect your application submission.

If a response exceeds the field limit requirements of any form, the applicant is advised to include the response as an attachment to the application. The applicant should move 'Attachments' to the 'Optional Documents for Submission' box in the application package, and clearly indicate in the form field that the information is included as an electronic file.

**Verify submission was successful.** Applicants should save and print written proof of an electronic submission made at Grants.gov. Applicants can expect to receive multiple emails regarding the status of their submission. Since email communication can be unreliable, applicants must proactively check on the status of their application if they do not receive email notifications within a day of submission.

An applicant should expect to receive two initial emails from Grants.gov: the first will confirm receipt of the application, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to EDA or has been rejected due to errors. Because it can take up to two business days after Grants.gov receives an application for applicants to receive email notification of an error, applicants should time their submissions to allow for application correction and resubmission by the deadline. Applicants will receive a third email once EDA has retrieved their applications.

EDA requests that applicants kindly refrain from submitting multiple copies of the same application package. Applicants should save and print both the confirmation screen provided on the Grants.gov website after the applicant has submitted an application, and the confirmation email sent by Grants.gov when the application has been successfully received and validated in the system. If an applicant receives an email from Grants.gov indicating that the application was received and subsequently validated, but does not receive an email from Grants.gov indicating that EDA has retrieved the application package within 72 hours of that email, the applicant may contact the representative listed in section VIII. of this announcement to inquire if EDA is in receipt of the applicant's submission.

It is the applicant's responsibility to verify that its submission was timely received and validated successfully at Grants.gov. To see the date and time your application was received, log on to Grants.gov and click on the "Track My Application" link from the left-hand menu. For a successful submission, the application must be received and validated by Grants.gov, and an agency tracking number assigned. If the date and time your application is validated and time-stamped by Grants.gov is later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the, your application is late. If your application has a status of "Received" it is awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will change to "Validated" or "Rejected with Errors." If the status is "Rejected with Errors," your application has not been received successfully. Some of the reasons Grants.gov may reject an application can be found at



<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs/grant-application-faqs.html>. For more detailed information on why an application may be rejected, please see “Troubleshooting Tips” at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/troubleshooting.html>.

**Grants.gov systems issues.** If you experience a Grants.gov “systems issue” (technical problems or glitches with the Grants.gov website) that you believe threatens your ability to complete a submission before the deadline, please (i) print any error message received; (ii) call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726 for immediate assistance; and (iii) contact EDA using the contact information in section VIII. of this FFO prior to the deadline for receipt of applications. Ensure that you obtain a case number regarding your communications with Grants.gov. Please note: problems with an applicant organization’s computer system or equipment are not considered “systems issues.” Similarly, an applicant’s failure to: (i) complete the required registration, (ii) ensure that a registered AOR submits the application, or (iii) notice receipt of an email message from Grants.gov are not considered systems issues. A Grants.gov “systems issue” is an issue occurring in connection with the operations of Grants.gov itself, such as the temporary loss of service by Grants.gov due to unexpected volume of traffic or failure of information technology systems, both of which are highly unlikely. In the event of a confirmed “systems issue,” EDA reserves the right to accept an application in an alternate format.

Applicants should access the following link for assistance in navigating Grants.gov and for a list of useful resources: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html> The following link lists frequently asked questions (FAQs): <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/general-support/faqs.html>. If you do not find an answer to your question under the “Applicant FAQs,” try consulting the “Applicant User Guide” or contacting Grants.gov by email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) or telephone at 1-800-518-4726. The Grants.gov Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Appendix A. Representation by Corporations Regarding an Unpaid Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Conviction Under Any Federal Law**

Sections 536 and 537 of Public Law 113-76, Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014, Title V (General Provisions) (the Act) prohibit funds made available by the Act from being used to enter into a cooperative agreement with or make a grant to any corporation that-

- a) Was convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, unless any agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interest of the Government; **and/or**,
- b) has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, unless an agency has considered suspension or debarment of the corporation and made a determination that this further action is not necessary to protect the interest of the Government.

**The Applicant represents that-**

It is ☐ or it is not ☐ a corporation that was convicted of a felony criminal violation under a Federal law within the preceding 24 months.

It is ☐ or it is not ☐ a corporation that has any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreements with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability.

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**[Signature of person who has authority to certify on behalf of the corporation]**

**[Typed name of the signing individual]**

**[Typed title of the signing individual]**

**[Typed name of corporation]**

**[Typed phone number of the signing individual]**

**[Typed email address of the signing individual]**